Weymouth Oct 15 1852

Dear Mary,

You have been so good in the way of writing to me late that I feel as if I might well occupy a whole sheet in thanking you. But I cannot really spare the room. I know you will believe my simple declaration that I am very deeply interested in every line you write, whether it have reference to the cause or to your own personal experience, and truly grateful for every assurance of your confidence and affection. Your last letter was received at a time when I was greatly exhausted, bodily and mentally, but I read it with much interest. It arrived on the 25th of Jan (I think) the day after the death of my Aunt. Perhaps my sisters may have spoken of her to you. She was the eldest sister of my father & her age a few months more than 77. She has been ill about fifteen years her complaint paralysis. She disorder has gone on very slowly but surely & for the two last years, her mental powers have been in almost complete aberrance. She suffered greatly, dying at last, by inches as it were.

She did not die as I had hoped by some sudden shock to the brain, but by pure exhaustion. The last forty eight of her life was very distressing both to herself & those surrounding her & we thanked God very truly (Lewis & myself) when the scene closed. She had great original strength of constitution & this so prolonged the last struggle that it seemed as if it would never end. She was more than 30 hours in that state which it is so terrible to witness & where human help is so entirely unavailing. Her sisters could not stay with her at the last & this so entirely unconscious (which was the great alleviation to us) Lewis & I felt that we ought not to leave her & so remained till all was over. Indeed we have been at the house which is not far from our old the time for a week before her death & several days after most of the time. But however painful to the feelings & harrowing to the nerves the accessories might have been, we could not consider the death as an affliction or any thing but a merciful release. Her state was such that it could not for two years have been reasonably regretted. She was a very pleasing

amiable person with much strength
of character & very warm affections, &
remembering how much she was to us
in our childhood & early youth it has
been very painful to me to consider
how much she has endured. It was
borne most patiently & firmly as long
as the mental faculties remained, &
even after wards, those characteristic
traits that so endear people
remained in a good degree. She re-
tained something of the old fashioned
polite formality & kind kind of manner
after the tangible things that sur-
rounded her appeared like dreams &
unrealities. I could have wished
that her dismission had been an
easier one, but

"When the shore is won at last,"

"Who will count the billows past."

Mr May kindly came from Boston
& attended the funeral, as our family
ecclesiastical relations always very
slight & conventional, are now entirely
broken up. It took place the day
before the Annual Meeting & se-
veral of our family were able to attend.
My brother & sister came from
Northampton & spent a week
with us. He is so stone & looks so

greatly improved that we are m
in charity with the water cure &
cannot but feel as if he would
be in the end, entirely restored to
perfect

I should have written till the
departure of the L. B. Box to write
you, but not circumstances so much
delayed it. As it is I learn from a
note last night from Mr May that
I can go in town & do my part
of the packing, & I shall take the
opportunity to send you a few pamph
lets & some news-paper extracts that
you may find either useful or
amusing. I wish the Bazaar Goddess
may meet your approbation, but
you need not hesitate to express an
disapprobation of any kind, for I have
no literary vanity (it is a bona fide
fact that I have no vanity of any
sort, whatever you may insinuate) &
I shall have no unpleasant sensations
at any censure, & if you like any
of it I shall be glad, & should be
surprised, were it not that you have
been so fortunate in your judgments
heretofore. I am impatient to hear
your views of Roscoe, tho' I cannot
think they will vary very much
from your own. There is so
much to be said on the "woman ques-
tion" that I don't think we could settle that satisfactorily
except face to face

2/ But the thing that I am anx-
-ious to do at this present, is to
pick up the glove which you have
constructively (as lawyers say) thrown
down. George Thompson, "nomen clarum,"
(I shall not add "venerable", hardly
thinking that epithet acceptable to the
gentleman himself) shall be the sub-
ject of my present sheet. I shall begin
by a liberality that will utterly
surprise you. You or any body else
may say that he is not a man that
interests you personally, or that it bores
you to hear him speak, & I will not
in consequence of the declaration accuse
you of any deficiency either in gifts
or graces. I must own I should
think the latter circumstance an
idiosyncrasy, a peculiarity, but still
nothing that should justify subject one
to any artistic or even anti Slavery
anathema. I shall really fight up
hill for Mr Thompson, except the
same that I wage in behalf of
every good abolitionist. When such
an one is attacked as such, & because
of what he has been & done in the
cause, I hold it a piece of duty

84

and honour to come to the rescue
let the issue made be ever so false
if it generally is a false one, for
in slavery people usually & naturally
prefer to avow any cause of opposition
to a man, rather than his hatred
to slavery. The strong friendship that
I have for Mr Thompson is something entirely personal to myself not
specially connected with his gifts as
an orator or his labours as an Abolitionist. I was drawn to him at first
by these circumstances unsolicited
but were he to never speak publicly again,
& were every slave in the world
emancipated tomorrow, it would make
no difference in my friendship for him
I can say this of but very few
people, for the tie that binds one
to the great majority of my fellow
labourers this side the pale, is the
identity of feeling and opinion on the
topic. I esteem others very highly in
love for their works sake, as says the
apostle. But this is a very different
matter from a personal friendship. Looking
at G. T. as an Abolitionist, & a very
laborious & fruitful one, I claim it of
every good person to accept him as

much & known him accordingly, & I claim the same in his measure for the stupidest man that ever bore testimony & the slave's behalf in the face of persecution & hatred. I call for no sympathy as regards my own private friendships, being so perfectly aware that the reasons for their formation are laid so deeply in our own characters & circumstances that we can hardly give them to ourselves, far less to others. The people who like Dr Follen can give just as little reason for their liking as can the others for their disliking. Speaking however of Mr Thompson in a very general manner & apart from my own personal predilections, I consider him very highly endowed with those qualities that primum genere regard. There is in his character a simplicity, sincerity, straightforwardness & entire absence of all sham such as is very unusual. Whatever waste of energy (speaking after the fashion of this world) he may have had in life, is owing quite as much to his excellencies as to his deficiencies of character. I have never known a man of his ability so removed by & unselfish. He has his errors & shrink

as are very apparent & in the person there is a carelessness & thoughtlessness & an omission of trifling duties & little obligations that certainly tend to impair his popularity except with those who can on account of his great qualities overlook these little failings.

As to what you say about Miss Martineau, I should not suppose at all she moved like Mr Thompson. They are both accustomed to be the suns of their respective firmaments. They have both been accustomed to receive great attention in the very diverse worlds in which they have moved, & neither of them have much intention of spending their time in the burning of incense, having been much more accustomed to play the part of recipients. They may both be very capable of loving other people, but when one is accustomed to play the chief part one's self it is not so easy to appreciate & another filling the same position. I scarcely imagine Mr Thompson would shrink into Miss Martineau agreeable & pleasing as she unquestionably is.

dare say that Mr Thompson finds it quite as strange why Mrs Chapman admires Miss Martineau, as Miss Martineau does why Mrs Chapman admires Mr Thompson. Now I come to Miss [illegible]. As will have been apparent from my dear friend my last sheet has been written partially in somewhat of a light minded spirit for my friendship for G. T. is very solid but in sober earnest what you tell me of Miss Pease course to you makes me like her less than any thing I ever heard of her. She has professed to be his devoted friend in past years & he spoke of her to me with great warmth and in terms of esteem. Her communication to you seems to me unfriendly and unhandsome in the extreme. An A. S. Society that is more George Thompson & could not make more prominent. I should consider a Society a new organization. It is the very objection the world brings against Garrison that he is very unpopular. Moreover I really don't understand what he means by his unpopularity. I should hardly think that the representative of one of the largest constituencies in the kingdom could with any propriety be called

a person specially odious to the people of course, as a friend of the Liberals he will not be much in favour with Tories & Conservatives, & this having cast in his lot with Garrison & the American Society will not recommend him to the so-distant religious public. As to the Quakers, has not Elizabeth Peare herself shown as it were alive among them for her advocacy of the Old Organization, & of course upon that ground neither we nor G. T. can expect any countenance. Who the people are that design to cooperate with the Old organization & yet would be driven away by G. T.'s being prominent I cannot imagine. I feel in a Mrs Gamp state of incredulity & "don't believe there are any such people." Elizabeth Peare must have heard these wicked Beaumonts or step mother's relations or perhaps they may be her own back till her natural good sense & right feeling is be forgot, or she could not have written as she did a day. It is not possible that Mr Thompson could have been in public life 20 years,

a Lecturer for the A. S. Society and the Anti Corn Law Association, the objects of both warmly conserved by a large & influential class without arousing some personal dislike & hostility. A man like Mr Cobden, for instance, may come out of a great struggle like the Anti Corn Law one, having so managed as to make his own interest & the cause of reform run parallel, & the money that he has made and the testimonials that have been given him shall give him a sort of prestige & standing even in the eyes of the people with whom he has been contending. But I can easily see how very unselfish & perhaps, (to be strictly just) I should say, so over cautious a person as Thompson, shall in spite of a conflict pecuniarily with duties while wholly omitting to obtain that amount of money which makes in England, par excellence, to important an item of respectability. Again there are circumstances which doubtless expose him to much petty gossiping remark. Every foolish speech of any

person connected in any way with him, dont like opposite to him in politics. But with all these deductions, I cannot but believe G. S. a popular person both in England & Scotland tho' I entirely agree that from a variety of reasons, he could not produce as great an effect with you as with us. I do not know how it would be were he a resident in America but no man has ever awakened the enthusiasm of Abolitionists throughout the world as he has done, ever aroused so great an interest on the part of the people generally & there is in the face of the strongest prejudice against the idea of a foreigner's visit what is called "one of our political institutions."

I shall write by the Box about other things to which your letter alludes, but I felt that I owed it to my absent friend (laying aside my private griefs, for I dont remember when he wrote me last) to defend him against the attacks of his quondam admirers. Lucia begs me to give you her love & thank you very much for your pretty Boston views. We have